



SCHOOL BOARD OF POLK COUNTY

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December 9, 2008

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GAIL F. MCKINZIE, Ph.D.
Superintendent

Dear Polk County Schools Employees:

The State of Florida is experiencing some of the worst economic times since the Great Depression. As the economy continues to deteriorate and statewide tax collections dwindle downward the Polk County School Board has had to constantly cut the budget deeper and deeper. Prior to the start of the 2008-2009 school year, the Polk County School Board has received over \$32.5 million less in funding to operate our schools.

Prior to the Polk County Schools developing the 2008-2009 budget another \$9.8 million was cut as a result of lower state revenues. On November 21, 2008, the State announced that revenues for the current fiscal year are off by approximately \$3 billion dollars which will result in almost \$25 million less dollars for the Polk County Schools. The 2008-2009 budget was developed anticipating this loss of funding, which will enable the district to meet its financial obligations for this school year. This will bring the total reductions to over \$67 million dollars since July 2007.

The outlook for the 2009-2010 school year indicates the economy will weaken further. The revenues are forecasted to be upwards of \$5 to \$6 billion dollars less than previously expected. As a result of these lower revenues, the Polk County Schools will have further reductions of \$45 to \$60 million dollars. It is very difficult to continue all the programs that make up a quality education when faced with these kinds of reductions. The district will be reviewing all programs and services that are offered in anticipation of this drastic cut in funding.

The district and the employees have made many sacrifices in order to avoid direct effects on the programs and students of this county. We are very grateful for the dedicated employees that commit themselves each day to providing the highest quality education possible to our students.

Sincerely,

Gail F. McKinzie, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Frank J. O'Reilly
School Board Chair